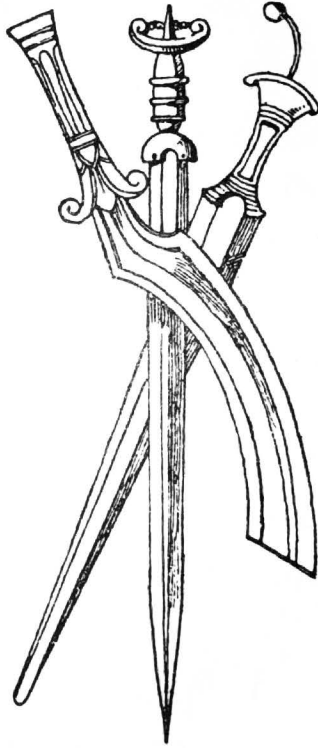


Argo Aloud



Writings on Transgender Life

Dec. '24

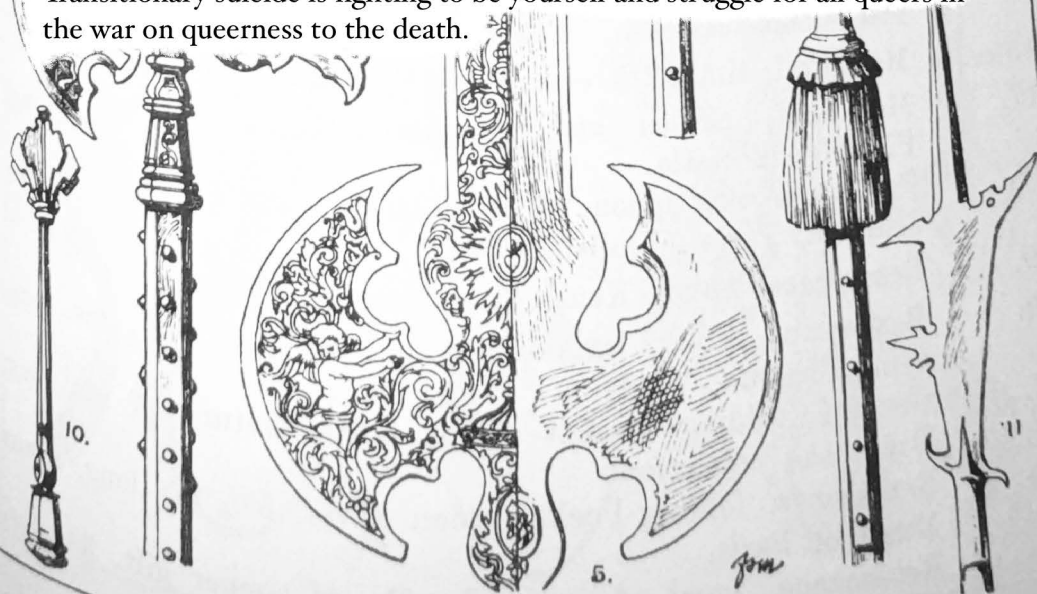
Transitional Suicide by Red Bullet

Explaining Revolutionary Suicide

Revolutionary suicide is when one answers the call to revolution. Answering this call does not mean disregarding oneself or committing (reactionary) suicide. Revolutionary suicide is a commitment to and for oneself, the people, and the movement. To commit reactionary suicide is to give into oppressive forces, while revolutionary suicide is to fight against and conquer them.

Transitional Suicide: Coming Out Under Capitalist Patriarchy

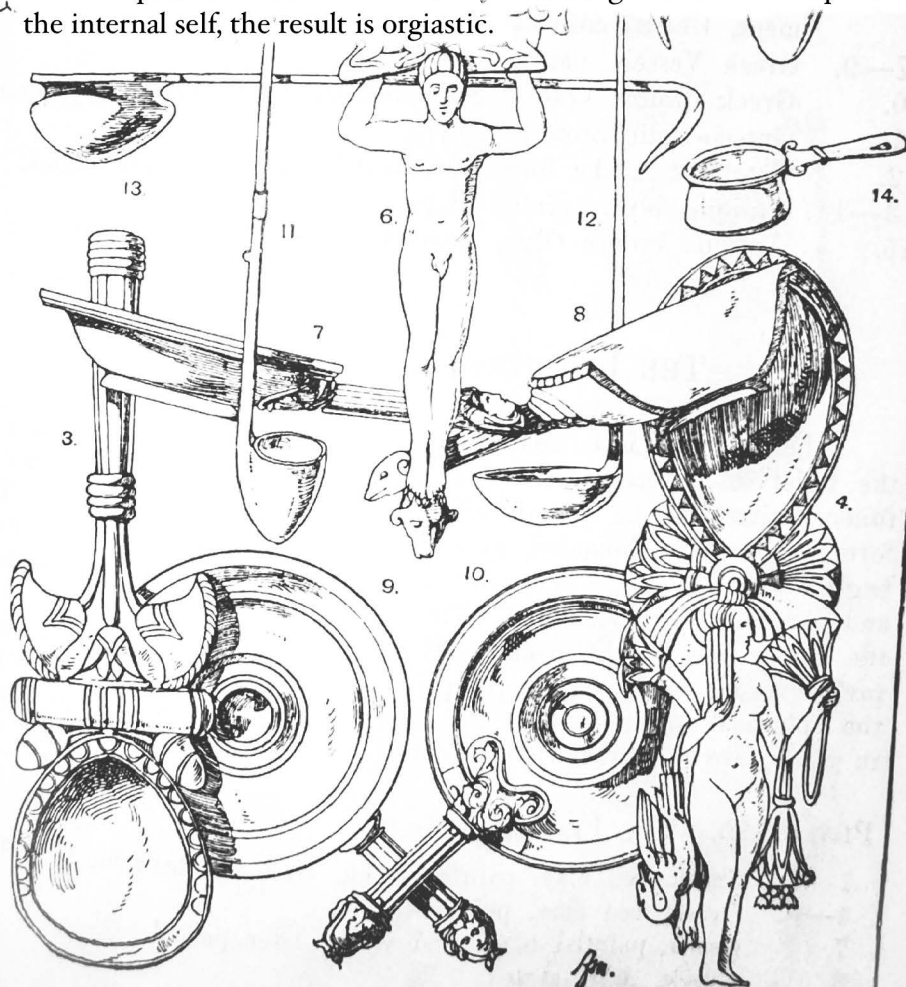
When coming out and pursuing transition, it is a big decision akin to revolutionary suicide. It is answering the call to be yourself regardless of the obstacles and levels of oppression one may face. It is also a revolution of the self, it is going from quality of expression (gender) to another quality. While we transition we change day-to-day into who we want to be, just as the revolutionary process changes society into what we want it to be, we advance in our struggle in the face of patriarchy. Many of us commit reactionary suicide, because of patriarchal oppression, but **WE MUST PUSH! WE MUST TRANSITION BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY!** Transitional suicide is fighting to be yourself and struggle for all queers in the war on queerness to the death.



Esoterrorist Trans-Mutation

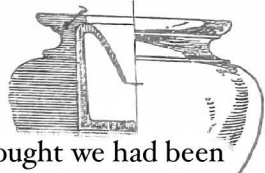
by *John*

We are shepherds disguised as wolves in illusionary nightmares. But man is beast before man. We bring sal(i)ventions and freedom as they bear teeth and twisted tongues. Tempters of temptation! Hear fear here! Immersed in violence we find fields of flowers dripping honey. Portals spread open to pleasure in inner-erotic synaptic stimulation. What exists shall ex-cis-t and re-exist. Archetypes abandoned and embraced at will. Transmutation is liberation. Explore outer worlds within. We bring one message: do what you will. Self-pleasure is not limited to the sexual orgasm. When one pleasures the internal self, the result is orgiastic.

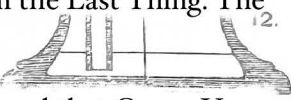


Our Geographies by Jen

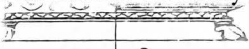
1. I was holding my breath when you found me. I thought we had been playing hide and seek. I've been hidden for so long. I peaked just this once, and my punishment was that I had been playing the wrong game. Mid-game of hopscotch, and I vanished. There's an irony in being exposed to the dark in order to win. I'm not so sure I won. I think you might have. I've never wanted to gloat so hard at losing what may have been the Last Thing. The chant comes out in croaks.



2. One time I asked for solace, and that's when I learned that Ocean Vuong, who I was once described as a poet, was in fact, a geographer. When he mapped out the spaces of queer love through footnotes. Did he mean to create us in the image of constellations? In many ways, this poem is his, or by that I mean, it's always been.



3. Once when I was little, I asked my mom if her stretch marks were from all the love she held for those around her, that her body expanded and contorted to keep hold of it all. I am so afraid that I'll fall in love with anything that much. I tried to make myself into something small. I wanted to see if this type of living might mean I was kept whole. Turns out there are many types of marks to leave on one's skin. Turns out there are many ways to leave a mark.



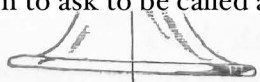
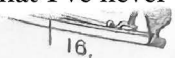
4. These stars feel more like God than anything my synagogue said to me. Same with butterflies. I used to whisper to them, "Hello God" in my little, wondrous voice. Divinity sat gently on my erect fingertip. I put my faith in the Little Things. I want to put faith in the little increments of tissue, of ligament, of bone, of lips, and teeth that stretch and grind.



5. I want you to make me feel hungry. And then Satiated. Anything that pulls our breath together, reminds me that I am flesh. That we transcend Our flesh too.



6. This is an apology. This is a prayer. This is me begging. But no, I'm telling you that I can change in the way that each breath changes the form of your body. I'm elastic. That I stir with the wind but am rhizomatic. I am the name that you call me in your sleep. That I am also the breath in between the name. That I've never known to ask to be called anything else.

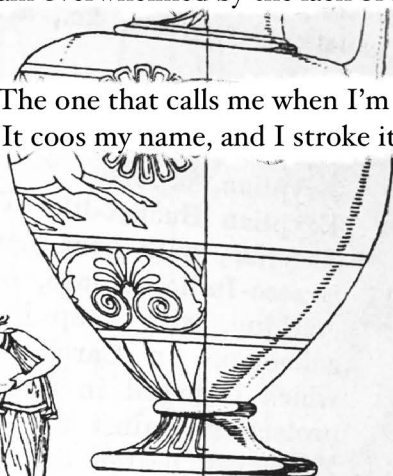
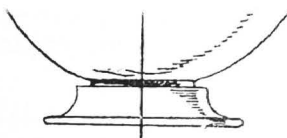


7. Fill the gaps. My breath cracks and I am overwhelmed by the lack of it all.

8. I'm sitting at the mouth of the river. The one that calls me when I'm drunk to stare down its restless waters. It coos my name, and I stroke its hair, calling it lover. Calling me baby.

9. I've never tasted anything like it.

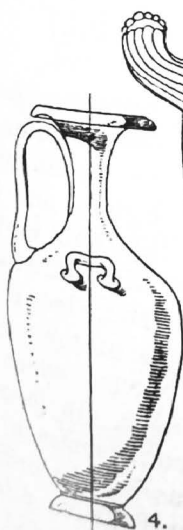
10. I count to ten one more time.



7.



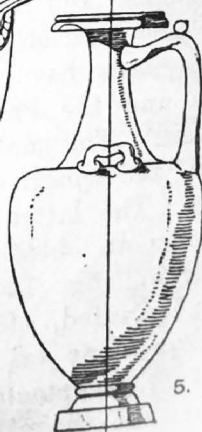
8.



4.



1.



5.

In the Suburbs They Call Us Trannies
by V. E.

2.



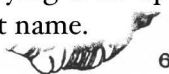
When I was five, I liked to think of myself as an explorer. The backyard of my parents' small ranch-style house was bordered by a dried up creek bed where even through the cover of the maple and ash trees, the sun would blister your skin. I had permission to adventure within eyesight of our back porch. At the climax of midwestern summers, my mornings were spent playing in the reeds with the neighborhood kids until it was too hot to bear. I'd escape into the house, where secretly my most daring expeditions took place.



My parent's bedroom was off limits when they weren't present, but the best air conditioning in the house happened to be in their walk-in closet. It's too on the nose that my formative childhood discovery occurred there. The air vent was in the far back corner, barely visible beneath the stacks of old sweaters and moth-eaten greek life t-shirts. I'd sneak in for a few minutes at a time, too anxious to stay for longer, and bask in the cold, musty dark.



A pair of my mother's knee high zip-up boots, unworn for years, were tucked away in the back corner as well. They were mesmerizing. Despite their age, the leather still shined. I would pull them on to my little legs, the shaft of the boots grasping at my hips. The zippers sounded like a gentle cat purring as I secured them to my tiny legs. Tottering back and forth felt like a ritual, a private runway show for the mites. I wasn't just playing dress-up—I was reaching for something real, something I couldn't yet name.



6.

7.



I was only caught in the closet once. It was my father who found me. The door swung open. My heart was racing. I hadn't put the boots on yet.



"What are you doing here, [REDACTED]?" he asked gently.

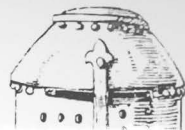
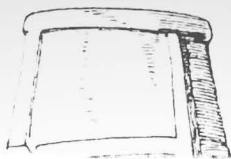
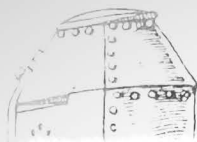


I decided then that he could never find out what was happening. How did I already know that sharing my transness could put me in danger? It wasn't his fault. He wasn't angry or judgmental, even when I came out much later. However, I understood that parts of me needed to remain hidden from others to stay safe at the time. It was a lesson that only deepened with age.

2.

1.

3.

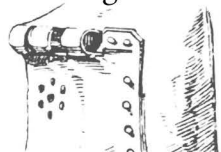
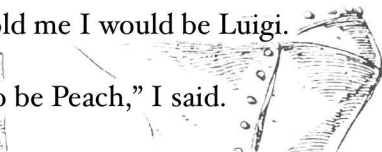
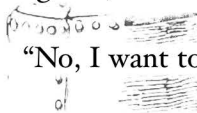


That same summer, I felt gender envy for the first time—toward Princess Peach. I loved her dress and the way the blue jewel on her chest would sparkle in the cutscenes on my gameboy. My hair needed to be long like hers.



✓

I asked one of my friends to play Mario with me in the creek bed. We'd often roleplay as characters from our favorite shows and games. He agreed, and told me I would be Luigi.



"No, I want to be Peach," I said.

His face contorted into a sneer. I knew instantly I had done something wrong. A pulsing lump of regret filled my throat.

5.

"Why would you pretend to be a girl? You're not one," he spat.

The embarrassment was overwhelming. I stuttered and stammered a weak retraction, agreeing to play the role of the titular brother, but the damage was already done. The brief exchange planted a seed of shame, one that would grow quietly and persistently, shaping how I navigated my identity throughout my childhood.

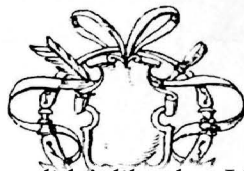
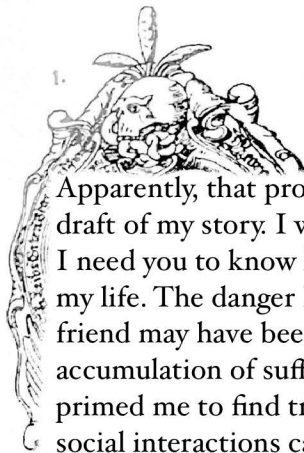
Fifteen years later, I tried writing a biomythography about these brief moments from my childhood for a creative writing class. My professor gave it a B-. It was too much for my fragile, insecure ego and needlessly high expectations of myself. At the time, I saw her feedback as a transphobic attack, though she had no way of knowing the story was about me. She had assigned a short fiction story, not a memoir. The grade alone felt like an attack not on my writing, but on the fragile truth I was still coming to terms with. I wanted validation, not dissection, and the absence of the former felt like rejection. I refused to read her comments for years. That moment crystallized years of rejection I'd carried in silence.



12.

10.

11.



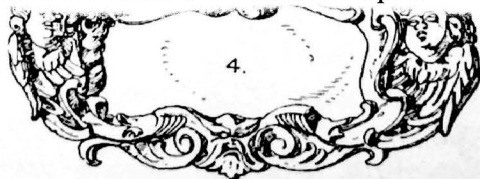
Apparently, that professor didn't like that I left signposting in the final draft of my story. I want to defy her advice one more time, with purpose. I need you to know how being trans has radically affected every aspect of my life. The danger I perceived from my professor, my father, and my friend may have been misplaced, but it came from a lifelong accumulation of suffering. Murmured slurs and "polite" discrimination primed me to find transphobia everywhere. Even the most innocuous social interactions carry the threat of changing my situation drastically for the worse.



The real moments of pain in my life can reflect the stereotypes too. I've been called a faggot and a shemale, told to kill myself. But these verbal attacks are just symptoms of a larger system designed to delegitimize and isolate us. They aren't the experiences I feel compelled to share because they aren't what make me a woman. Really, I knew I was a woman long before any of those things happened.

This must be what it feels like to be Princess Peach, to be the oversimplified depiction of a woman who has had her autonomy revoked. I have to get state-permission to change my body and publicly announce my dead name in a fucking newspaper if I want to be recognized by society as who I am. If I'm arrested today, I'll be imprisoned with men. The staggeringly high odds that I will be murdered, or lose access to reliable housing and food, or die by my own hand are terrifying.

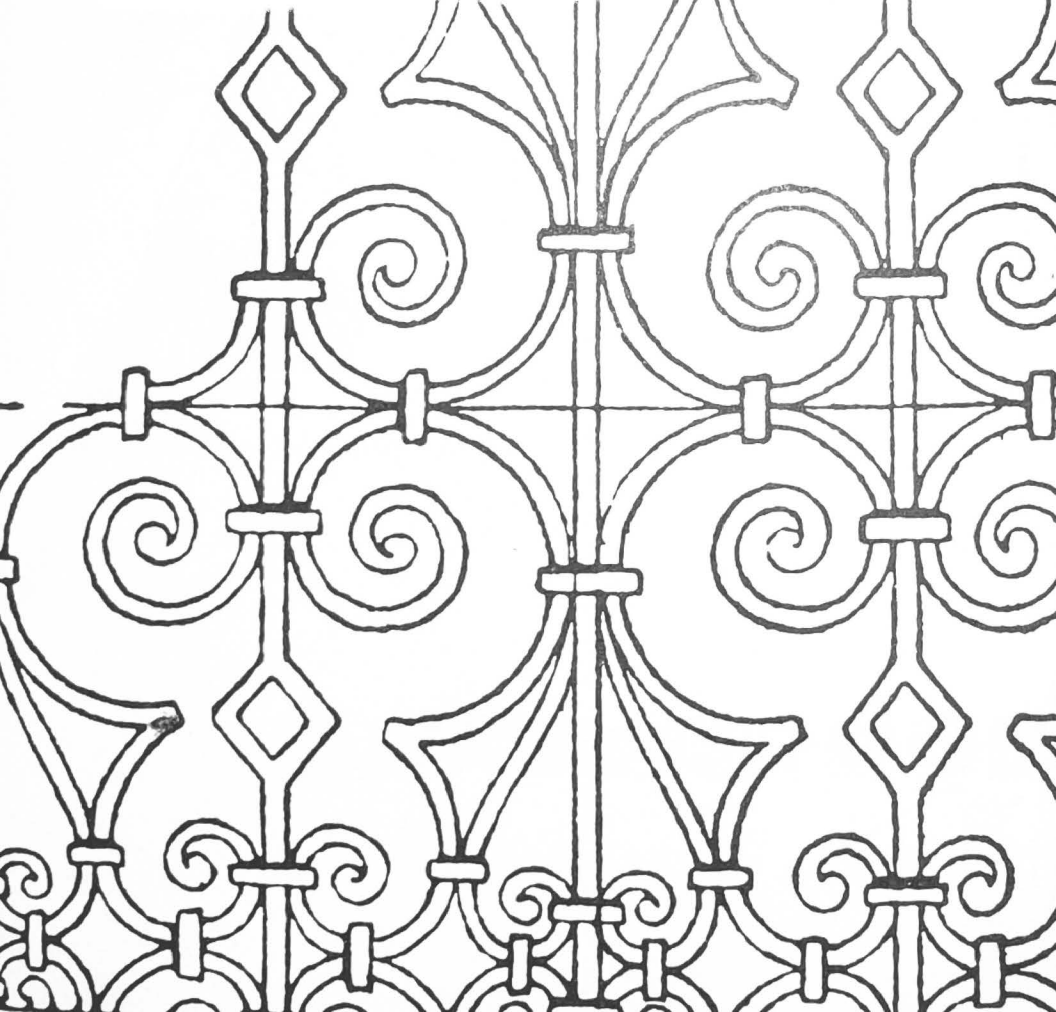
But maybe more impactful than the terror on my psyche is having so little direct control over basic aspects of my life. It is exhausting. The only reliable way I've found that makes it easier is spending time with other trans women. Overcoming the internalized belief that I'm alone is best accomplished by proving repeatedly to myself that I am not. Like Peach, my existence is seen as ornamental; there to fulfill someone else's narrative, stripped of my own agency. Yet even as she's stolen away, Peach remains resilient. Her friends will come to help her. That's the part I cling to.



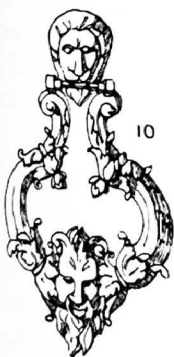
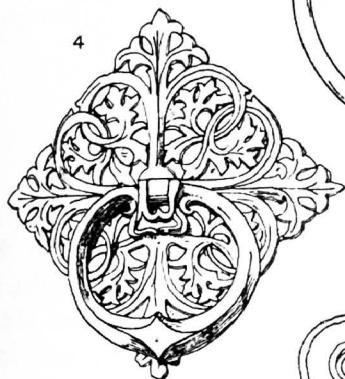
Join



If you're reading this and you're trans, please get to queer spaces and connect with other people like you. (I know that is a big ask, and potentially a dangerous one. Use your own discretion on how to do it safely.) The only way we find each other is by having the courage to be ourselves. Seek out other trans people and making plans together is how we build the solidarity we need to survive. You don't have to navigate life alone.



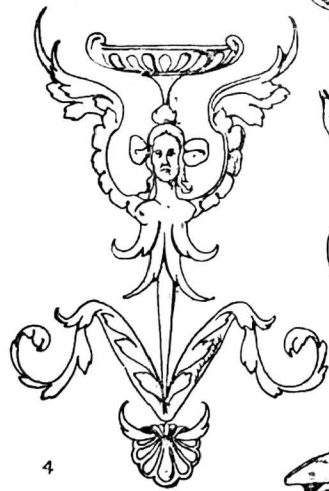
In the late hours of girls' night, I find the answer to what makes me a woman: society or myself? It's both. And maybe it started in a walk-in closet, wearing boots that didn't quite fit, but feeling that I was stepping toward the person I was meant to become. I'm a tranny and a woman, and nothing can take that away.

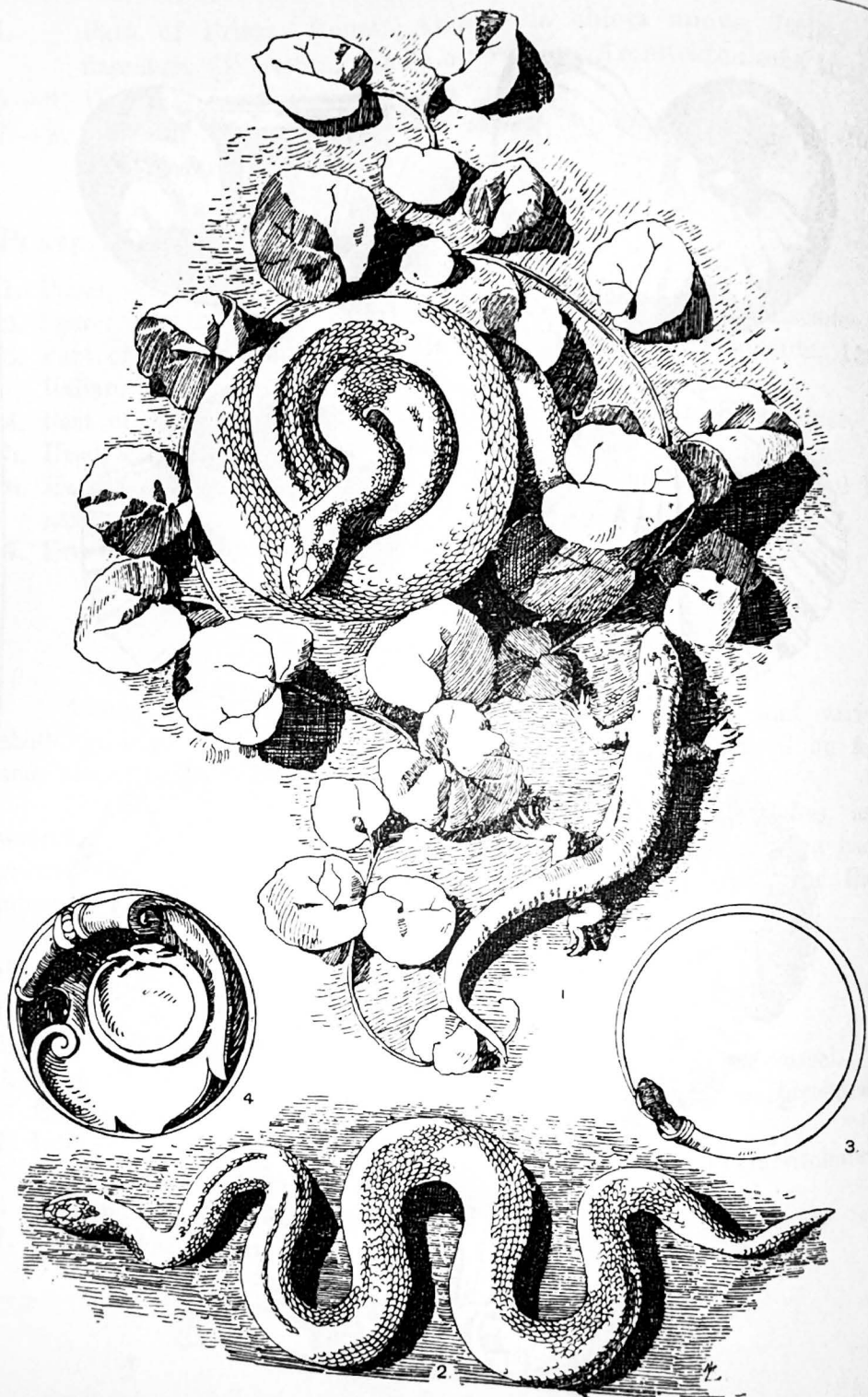


gms.



The Wing.





growing up, i felt different
i felt weird

i never knew why, but something was off

i tried so hard to be a "girly girl" in high school

wearing dresses and mary janes and frilly socks

trying every variety of vintage women's fashion i could find

wearing my mom's old formal dresses to school dances because
god — i didn't want to bother finding my own

i tried replicating outfits i saw on other girls at school

and, looking in the mirror, it felt all wrong.

no matter what girl i tried to be, it felt all wrong.

i graduated and explored

dyeing my hair different colors

trying out new fashion

doing crazy makeup

it still felt all wrong.

when covid hit, i stopped caring

i thought i'd never feel right

i gave up

then one day

i chopped off my hair

tried out a new name

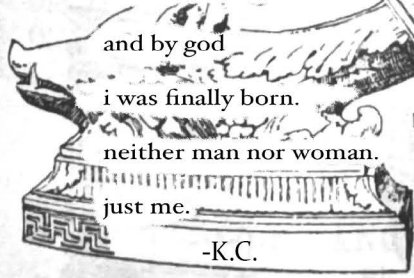
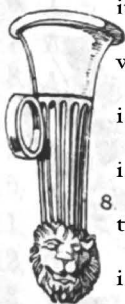
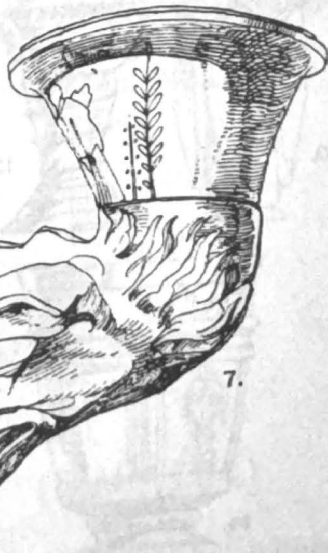
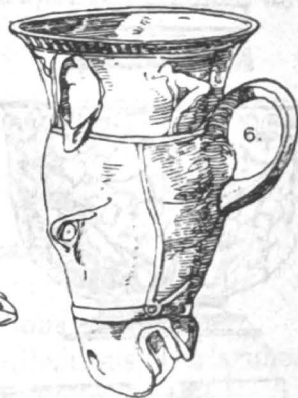
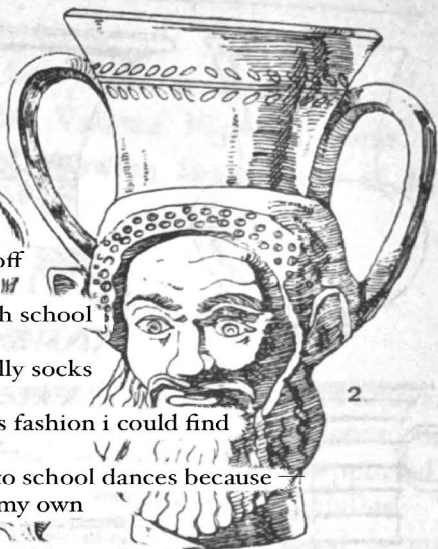
and by god

i was finally born.

neither man nor woman.

just me.

-K.C.





1. Be Broken To Be Whole
by L. D.

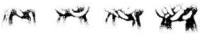
I don't know what I'm writing about here, and I don't know what I don't know. By writing, I'm sullyng the point. And by professing to not-knowing, I might mistakenly imply that I actually understand. I do not, I assure you. I mean everything I have written, and I share it in earnest.



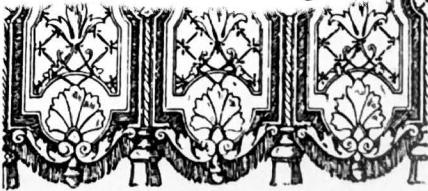
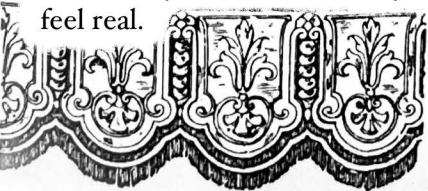
3. Trans people are suffering for many reasons, you don't need me to name them all. One aspect that I witness suffering in is something subtle and pervasive, and it's hard to write, talk, and think about. 4. I will not do it justice here, but perhaps I can spark your curiosity.



I see us suffering under the yolk of dualistic thought, a worldview of differentiations and separations. We are taught dichotomies, and mutually-exclusive categorizations. I tell people I am a woman. I am fully a woman, which means that I am also a man. This is not because of my transness. I am fully a woman, which contains man, because to keep to "woman" requires knowing "man." The same goes for man containing woman, and non-binary identities containing binary identities and vice-versa and all possible configurations, and for all things. Water and land, birds and toads, bikes and cars. All things exist in contrast to each other.

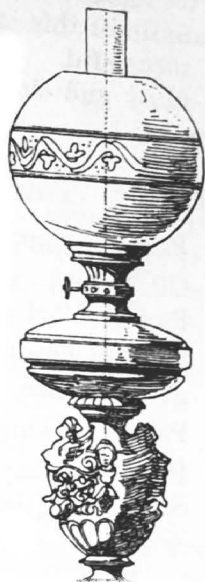
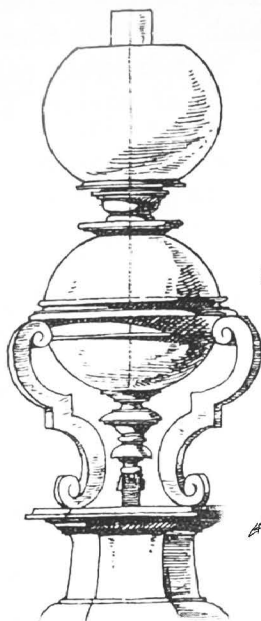


5. Labels are necessary for functional communication, but they flatten and confuse reality. To fully perceive even something as simple as a dewdrop on a blade of grass encroaches on the ineffable, especially considering the whole of the sky is reflected and contained within it. So we say "this is a woman, that is a man, this is a non-binary person" and so on. But when it is said uncritically and without analysis, over time, those labels begin to feel real.



8. 9.





Ce n'est pas un arbre. Setting aside Magritte, imagine yourself in the real physical space depicted here. It is reasonable to assert that most people would identify the object depicted in the center of the image as a tree. If you and I were standing in his field, we would identify the tree as concrete. It exists, and it can be perceived and interacted with. It is a tree, but it is also not a tree. In its not-tree it is just a tree. What is a tree? I am ignorant of trees beyond the basics, so I would say a tree is a tall and woody plant with roots, a trunk, branches, and leaves or needles. But this is wrong, too. Trees are emergent properties of dirt, nutrients, weather, water, air, a seed, sunlight, and so many things. Those are all inexorably part of the tree, and where I chose to differentiate between what is tree and what is not is a choice I made. In reality, these things all exist together and are not separable. And trees contain seeds, and seeds contain trees. And yet we call it a tree, and other things are not called trees.



I am a woman, which means I contain man. When I look in the mirror, whatever of myself I see in reflection is a woman. Even on the days when I see my strong jaw, cleft chin, broad shoulders—those are a woman's. Even if I look in the mirror and see a man, I am still looking at a woman. How could I not? Woman contains and is defined by man. Man contains and is defined by woman. When I look in the mirror, I see my reflection. I am a woman.





There is no purity of identity, and it is the impurity that makes you whole. Trying to fully purge yourself of how you were previously understood is impossible and can only lead to suffering and breaking. Pursue the true expression of yourself, not a perfect expression of the idea of yourself. Find solace and serenity in reality: you are exactly who you are, exactly how you are. You have autonomy to change and become more yourself, but you are also not yourself as you are now. I look in the mirror and I see myself, a woman. It is a choice and skill to perceive reality such-as-it-is. It is a delusion to look in the mirror and see a man, because I am a woman. Many people share this delusion, but that does not make it true. It also does not make their delusions any less dangerous.

5.   7.

Do not participate in delusions. You are exactly who you are, and your identity is not something that can be intellectualized by someone else. Look in the mirror, there you are. I cannot teach you how to do this, because I am a student myself. Lao Tzu and Eihei Dōgen are teachers, you can learn from them and all the ten thousand things.



